

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 15th day of June, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and sixth.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 4948 of June 14, 1982

Baltic Freedom Day

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The independence of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia was extinguished in 1939 as a result of a nefarious deal struck between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. Hitler handed Stalin the three Baltic republics as a bonus to secure his cooperation in the destruction of Poland and to obtain a secure eastern frontier which enabled him to launch war against the western democracies. Subsequently, hundreds of thousands of Baltic nationals were deported to the Soviet Union where many of them perished in prisons and forced labor camps. The darkest day of that great human tragedy occurred on June 14, 1941, when their homes and jobs were taken by Russian settlers.

Today, some of the survivors of these mass deportations are citizens of the United States. Their aspirations for a better future for the peoples of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have helped to bring new meaning to our nation's commitment to freedom for all people. The United States has never, over the intervening forty-one years, recognized the forcible incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union.

As a nation, we remain dedicated to the furtherance and preservation of the fundamental human rights and freedoms of all people and take note on this special day of our hope that the blessings of liberty will one day be part of the national life of the courageous people of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Ante, p. 117.

The Congress of the United States by Senate Joint Resolution 201 has authorized and requested the President to proclaim June 14 as Baltic Freedom Day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate June 14, 1982, as Baltic Freedom Day. I call upon the people of the United States to reaffirm their belief and hope that the citizens of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia and of all nations will one day achieve through peaceful means the goals of democratic freedom and self-determination.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 14th day of June, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and sixth.

RONALD REAGAN